THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI BOLLA BULLI RAMAIAH) : (a) Voluntary Retirement Scheme was introduced in Coffee Board during 1994. Requirement of pooling has been completely done away with from September, 1996.

(b) A total number 1494 have opted under the existing scheme and 1322 employees have been relieved.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) Does not arise.

Export of Readymade Garments

3232. SHRI N.S.V. CHITTHAN :
SHRI MAHAMMAD ALI ASHRAF FATMI :
SHRI KASHIRAM RANA :
SHRI KRISHAN LAL SHARMA :

Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) the total value of export of ready-made garments made during the current financial year and how does it compare with the last three year;

(b) whether the export of readymade garments has declined recently;

(c) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(d) the steps proposed to be taken by the Government to boost to the export of readymade garments?

THE MINISTER OF TEXTILES (SHRI R.L. JALAPPA): (a) The total value of export of readymade garments made during the current financial year upto October 1996 and that made during the corresponding periods of the last three years have been as follows :

Period (April-October)	Value In million US Dollars
1993-94	1813.68
1994-95	2264.28
1995-96	2243.51
1996-97	2553.73

(b) No, Sir.

(c) Does not arise.

(d) In order to boost the exports of garments, Governments have been taking a number of steps, which include encouraging exporters to participate in buyer-seller meets; fairs and exhibitions; enabling import of capital goods at concessional duty for export production; special arrangements for duty free import of raw material for export production; ensuring increased availability of export credit etc.

Foreign Exchange Regulation Act, 1973

3233. SHRI R. SAMBASIVA RAO : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government are contemplating to modify Foreign Exchange Regulation Act, 1973; and

(b) if so, the details thereof alongwith the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM) : (a) and (b). Major changes in FERA were carried out vide Foreign Exchange Regulation (Amendment) Act, 1993 (29 of 1993). A review of FERA was initiated in 1992 by setting up a Task Force. Further changes, if any may also be considered in due course.

Double Taxation on Dividend

3234. SHRI ANNASAHIB M.K. PATIL : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government are considering a proposal to scrap double taxation on dividend; and

(b) if so, the present status of the proposal?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM) : (a) and (b). Various policy measures are considered by the Government as apart of the budgetary exercise every year and the new decisions are reflected in the budget documents.

Liberalisation of Restrictions in Indo-Bangladesh Trade

3235. DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY :
SHRI TARIQ ANWAR :

Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether India and Bangladesh have agreed to liberalise trade restrictions;

(b) if so, the details thereof alongwith the main items and areas on which trade restrictions have been liberalised;

(c) whether this removal of restrictions have been proved helpful to both countries; and

(d) if so, the details thereof and to what extent it is likely to be helpful?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI BOLLA BULLI RAMAIAH) : (a) to (d). Both India and Bangladesh are members of SAARC